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Press release | 08.11.2023

EU enlargement: Greens/EFA welcome progress but call for commitment to reforms

Today, the European Commission published its progress reports on EU accession for Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, the Western Balkans and Turkey. The new momentum for enlargement triggered by Russia's war of aggression, which resulted in candidate status for Ukraine, Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2022, now brings these countries a step closer to their goal of EU membership.

Markéta Gregorovà MEP, Greens/EFA Member of the Committee for Foreign Affairs, comments:

“The Commission's assessment to conditionally recommend the opening of accession talks with Ukraine and Moldova is a strong signal that further enlargement is within reach. The EU must be prepared for this historic moment and make the necessary internal reforms to welcome new members as soon as they fulfill the accession criteria. We note the recommendation to grant Georgia candidate status on the understanding that several steps are taken. We call on the Georgian government to seriously and proactively engage with the required reforms to meet not just the steps set out by the Commission, but more importantly the aspirations of the Georgian people.It is also essential to improve the accession process, with a clearer timeframe and tangible, gradual benefits for candidate countries before full EU membership. It is time for the EU to protect its strategic interests by completing European integration for the benefit of the entire continent.”

Tineke Strik MEP, Greens/EFA Member of the Committee for Foreign Affairs, comments:

“This new push on EU enlargement is long overdue. The process must however remain merit-based. We count on candidate countries to implement the reforms they have committed to. At the same time, EU countries must muster the political will to live up to their commitments and promises and not stall the process for political reasons. We therefore would like to see more progress from the EU for countries that are delivering on reforms, such as the long-overdue start of accession negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia and visa liberalisation for Kosovo. We cannot forget the Western Balkans and must restore trust in the region by sticking to our promises to countries that are delivering on reforms and to offer them a realistic perspective for accession.”

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